

# Section Two

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## Cause for Thankfulness

FOR what, and to whom, Thanks should I render,  
When I wake on the dawn of Thanksgiving?  
For glorious Nature in the morn of its splendor,  
For health in the world I'm living!

FOR the sun, "Old Sol," the fire of my days,  
The silvery moon and stars of the night,  
One warming the earth with its brilliant rays,  
All filling the skies with heaven's own light.

FOR the breath I breathe and the winds that blow,  
For flowers that bloom, so fragrant and fair,  
For what I believe and for what I know,  
For fields and forests and birds of the air.

FOR the friends I have and the friends I've had,  
For the thoughts I think and the dreams I dream,  
For the days gone by when I was a lad,  
For this Thanksgiving—this hour supreme.

FOR peaceful America, home of my birth,  
A soul acquainted with sorrow and mirth,  
For a dear old mother whose hair is white,  
Her thoughts of the day, her prayers of the night—  
I render Thanks to God on high.

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## RELIGION BASED ON GRATITUDE

Truth in Assertion There Cannot  
Be the One Without  
the Other.

Therein Lies the Particular Bet-  
terment to All Men in the Devout  
Feeling and Celebration of  
Thanksgiving.

"He that urges gratitude pleads the cause of both God and men, for without it we can neither be sociable nor religious," says the pagan philosopher, Seneca. Thanksgiving, then, if this be true, is not only an act of worship, but an influence for social advancement. Gratitude is said to be the rarest of virtues, yet it exists, and it runs like a golden chain throughout society, binding men together. Nor is it as rare as we are likely from experience and observation to think it is. False gratitude may be eloquent, but it is not easy to express real gratitude in words. "No metaphysician ever felt the deficit of language so much as the grateful," and through that deficiency gratitude is often dumb. Neither is conduct a true test, for circumstances may deny the opportunity of its expression, or conflicting circumstances may prevent its expression when opportunity arises. There is much gratitude in the world, between men and men, for which evidence is lacking, yet there is probably no man who cannot recall a feeling of gratefulness within himself which he never voiced and for favors which he never requited. Knowing more of our own thoughts and feelings than we do of those of others, we are likely to think the quality of gratitude is our peculiar possession, and cynically to agree with Rochefoucauld that "gratitude in the generality of men is only a strong and secret wish to receive still greater benefits." Undoubtedly there is much on the surface to justify that view, but while the quality of real gratitude may vary considerably in its strength there are few if any who are wholly lacking, and the mere consciousness of it makes it a potent force in the social advancement of man. Whether thanksgiving be expressed or withheld it is an influence for betterment within every one of us, for the feeling toward others is the test of our souls.

For if that is true as between men, it is much more true, and a much more

potent influence, between men and God. The sense of gratitude is the measure of devotion. If it is a mere utterance of the lips it has no meaning, no matter how eloquently worded, reasons a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. If it does not come from the heart it is a mockery; and the deeper its feeling, even though it be dumb, the closer it brings one to its divine objective. No pen of praise can reach one-half so high as the thankful thought, which is itself a prayer. It is more than an acknowledgement of benefits. It is an outpouring of spirit, an uplifting of the invisible self into contact with its source, with a consequent enrichment of new strength and new courage. Gratitude, as the old pagan said, is essential to religion. There is no religion where there is no gratitude. And the power of religion is in exact proportion to the sense of thankfulness it inspires. That does not mean that God is a great almsgiver who dispenses charity for the reward of appreciation. He gives because he is God, and giving is the expression of his unaltered goodness. He gives freely regardless of thanks. He cannot be bribed to larger favors by gratitude. The effect of gratitude is upon ourselves, in the exercise of our souls and in the approach to deity through that exercise, which is the essential essence of religion.

And that effect may be collective as well as individual. We are today a nation engaged in thanksgiving. We are, in totality, a hundred million souls expressing gratitude to Him for His blessings to us as a people. If that is a mere formality it is nothing—it is worse than nothing. We may be quite sure that God does not delight in

rhetoric that is but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. "We may be equally sure that we as a nation are not advanced or uplifted by sermons or prayers or speeches that, however beautifully attired, are but words. But if that thankfulness is real, if it is felt within, if we are conscious of it, if its expression comes from the heart, then is the soul of the nation raised up thereby, and given a larger vision, an increase of power, a nearer approach to the glory of divinity, by the exercise of the spirit within us, reaching out to clasp hands with its creator and the source of all its strength.

And manifestly there is abundant reason for that gratitude and its expression. We need not, we cannot, "count our blessings one by one," as the song entreats us to do. They are too many for counting, too overwhelming for measurement. We who but a short century ago were relatively insignificant now stand at the forefront of the nations of the earth, admittedly supreme in its leadership. We are self-contained, self-controlled, prosperous above all other peoples. We find ourselves, in this year of His grace, directing, in a very large measure, the destinies of mankind. In the great catastrophe of nations we have suffered less and gained more than any other. In the annals of history no people have advanced so fast nor attained so greatly. Did we do this? Are we what we are, and possess what we have because of our superior wisdom and activity? Can we slap our chests and proclaim ourselves pre-eminent through our own might? A mere cursory glance over our record proves the contrary, proves, indeed, a guidance and support without which we would still be insignificant. Nor is it hard, in the light of this day, to understand the why of this guidance, to see that we are instruments in His hand for the achievement of a divine purpose, not for ourselves, but for humanity, of which we are a part and in whose future blessings we shall largely share. Yes, there are reasons, great reasons, for America's thankfulness today, thankfulness for our past, for our present and for our future; and if we feel this, and to the extent that we are conscious of it, and recognize it, we shall be fitting ourselves and equipping ourselves for the larger tasks that are still beyond the dawn.

### The Happy Warrior



God is in All.  
Be He nowhere else. God is in all that liberates and lifts, in all that humbles, sweetens and consoles.—Lowell.

## The Gobbler and Ann Maria Teller

By F. H. SWEET

Ann Maria Teller was guarded with the jealousy of crabbed ownership rather than love; while Lester Brockaw, the son of an impecunious neighbor, was hated because he was poor and boldly aspired to the hand of Ann Maria.

So it came to the day before Thanksgiving. That morning old Job Teller was in his yard looking with ominous eyes at a big gobbler. It was a good bird, and would be a wise leader for the next year's flock. But the gobbler weighed fully twenty-eight pounds, and there was a son of his, a dejected young turkey that never strutted in the late father's presence, which weighed not more than twelve. That left a difference of sixteen pounds, at probably 25 cents a pound, live weight. It was too big a strain on the old man's avaricious soul, and the narrowing eyes said that the old gobbler was doomed.

It may be that long association of similar minds had brought them to read each other's thoughts; or perhaps the death-croaks of expiring chickens that morning had agitated the wise bird with a presentiment of danger. But be that as it may, even as the avaricious eyes were questioning the weight, the old fellow gave a defiant gobble, spread his wings, and rose majestically to the top of a near-



Looking With Ominous Eyes at a Big Gobbler.

by apple tree. There he rested a brief moment, then went on to the next, and from there to the next and next, and so on to the woods beyond.

The grim eyes watching him grew wrathful for a moment, then followed the flight speculatively. A little way in the woods was a spreading oak, and there the gobbler had often spent a night in his younger days, to wear off a fit of sulks. Old Job made a motion to follow, then shook his head, chuckled, and went on through the yard to select other turkeys and chickens for the Thanksgiving sacrifice. Following turkey nature, the old gobbler would pass the night in the oak, and with dusk he would become stupid and drowsy and easy to remove from the limb.

Ann Maria was shy, but had signals of red and blue and other shades in clothing to hang from her window, and these she used freely. Lester was not shy nor to be intimidated, but he was diplomatic, and so managed his labor and hunting and fishing as to keep the window conspicuously in sight. When Job went from the house, soon after dusk, a white skirt and a blue jacket appeared successively at the window. Lester dropped his fishing pole unceremoniously and scuttled forward to a forbidden interview.

They were standing close together in the shade of the vine-covered porch, when there came a shrill outcry of gobble-gobbling and denunciatory threats and exclamations of pain from the direction of the woods.

"Your father's got the gobbler, or the gobbler's got him, or both," commented Lester, as he stuck his head through the vines to listen.

"They're coming this way, slowly," said Ann Maria, after some moments. "Then it's your father who's got him, a little," declared Lester, with conviction. "But it's a fight."

"Haden't you better be going now?" asked Ann Maria, at the end of another five minutes, as she tried half-heartedly to disengage herself from his embrace.

"No," he decided, "I'll take another

## TOM TURK, PESSIMIST



The day before Thanksgiving  
There's a price upon my head,  
And if I do escape this time  
There's Christmas still ahead!  
But though I'm feeling dreary  
I don't wish that I were dead!

five minutes to get here, and there's a good chance of the gobbler's breaking away and it all having to be done over again. Then at the worst I can push back into the vines out of sight. Your father'll be too excited to bother about me. Now you will consent, won't you?" dropping his voice coaxingly. "I've spoken to the minister and all, and he'll be looking out for us any time I can get you away. Won't—"

There came a tremendous clatter right at the corner of the house. "Gobble-gobble-gob-gob-bie!" shrieked the turkey; and "I'll wring your blamed old neck soon's I get a good hold, see 'I don't, you—your limp of feathers!" snarled the man. And then followed a more determined flapping of wings, threats and snarls of pain, accompanied by a tugging and dragging sound, and—

"Crowd into the vines, quick!" whispered the girl. "He's right here."

The arm left her waist, and she stepped out to the edge of the porch, where a streak of moonlight touched her and flickered off in front.

Another moment, and the struggling Job and the gobbler broke into the flicker. The angry bird looked rough and disheveled; the man's hat was gone, and trickles of blood showed on face and hands where claws and beak had been at work. Of the two, the bird was the fresher.

"I'll—wring—your—blamed—," gasped old Job, thickly, and then, "Drat it all! He's got away!"

The gobbler flopped off into the dusk. Job stumbled after, yelling as he did so, "Ann Maria! Ann Maria! Come and help."

"Dad!" she cried, as she raced after him. "The horrid thing will kill you. Come back!"

From the darkness of the porch another figure sprang out.

"If that raging old gobbler tackles Ann Maria he's liable to claw her eyes

to the fleeter second as she came up, "Run, run, Ann Maria! Don't ye stop by me, 'cause I'm beat out! Grab—the-blamed—old—"

And then as Ann Maria darted away, the third figure rushed past. But it was too dark and old Job was too angry to realize who it might be.

As he went under the apple trees, the gasping turkey heard swift steps



It Was Too Late to Retreat.

closing in on him from behind, and with a last mighty effort hurled himself forward into the minister's open doorway, and fell dead. At that instant Ann Maria's quick fingers closed upon him, and the eager hand of Lester dropped carelessly upon the girl's shoulder.

"Hello, who's there?" called the minister. "Come in."

It was too late for retreat, so they stepped inside, Ann Maria holding the turkey.

"What! what!" exclaimed the minister, delightedly. "A Thanksgiving turkey for me, and a big one, too! You are indeed neighborly. Jack," to a boy standing near, "take this fine fellow to the kitchen. And yes, here's Lester, too. I see, I see. Well, we're all ready, I guess. Jack, tell your mother and sister to come in here for witnesses."

He turned to a table and picked up a book. Lester and Ann Maria stared inquiringly at him. Then the man's face broadened into an ecstatic grin, and he winked at his companion. Ann Maria comprehended and grew red, but answered the wink with a smile.

In five minutes the ceremony was over, and as the last word fell from the minister's lips, another figure darkened the doorway.

"What? Neighbor Job Teller!" greeted the minister, advancing cordially. "They did not tell me you were coming. Too bad, too bad it's all over! But you're just as welcome."

Job Teller opened and shut his mouth, and then opened and shut it again. There were those who said Job did not have a single redeeming trait. But that was not so. He could swallow a fact when it was thrown at him. He turned and stumbled out.

"Well, I'll be darned," they heard him mutter.

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